



**Maine State Government
Dept. of Administrative & Financial Services
Office of Information Technology (OIT)**

Accessibility Policy on Effective Electronic Communications

I. Statement

State Executive Branch agencies are responsible for ensuring that its communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This policy requires that all electronic documents and materials, transmitted to communicate information, are available in accessible, appropriate and alternative formats and to provide accessible phone service, consistent with the Standards and Best Practices in Appendix A.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to Executive Branch agencies and others in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Maine Human Rights Act. Providing effective communication will help ensure that individuals who have disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of State services, programs, and activities.

III. Applicability

This policy applies to all agencies within the Executive Branch of Maine State Government. This policy applies to materials developed, produced, or distributed by a State agency, whether created by State employees or by contracted vendors(s). It also applies to communications using TTY and relay call technologies.

IV. Responsibilities

A. State Agencies: Each agency shall implement this policy in cooperation with the Office of Information Technology and the State ADA Accessibility Coordinator. Agencies shall be responsible for:

1. Monitoring the implementation and the enforcement of this policy within the agency;
2. Making materials available in appropriate alternative formats and providing accessible phone service, including TTY and relay calls, consistent with the Standards and Best Practices in Appendix A;
3. Providing or obtaining technical assistance and recommending or developing training or management actions to advance the use of best practices within the agency and the

State; and

4. Coordinating review of this policy within the agency and recommending to the Office of Information Technology appropriate measures for improving compliance.

B. Office of Information Technology: The Office of Information Technology shall have primary responsibility for the policy, including the following:

1. Providing leadership to agencies and State employees and, if needed, disseminating reports, policy directives or clarifications.
2. Reviewing all RFP's and contracts for information technology (IT) for compliance with this policy;
3. Providing information and direction to agencies and vendors regarding best practices in contracted IT services; and
4. Coordination with the Information Technology Accessibility Committee to identify changing information technologies.

C. State ADA Accessibility Coordinator: The State ADA Accessibility Coordinator shall have responsibility for the following:

1. Coordinating Statewide implementation and review of this policy;
2. Consulting, as necessary, with the Office of Information Technology and the Information Technology Accessibility Committee regarding this policy and Appendix A; and
3. Advancing the use of best practices by providing technical assistance, maintaining a list of Disability Related Resources, developing a Statewide training program, and recommending management actions.

V. Directives

The guidelines for use in conjunction with this policy are [“Standards and Best Practices for Accessible Information and Effective Communication” \(Appendix A\)](#). Standards and practices other than those in Appendix A may be used when they provide equivalent or greater accessibility than the standards in Appendix A.

VI. Definitions

Agency: Any Department or other unit of government within the Executive Branch.

CIO: The Chief Information Officer of the Office of Information Technology within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

Document or material: Any information transmitted using electronic media that can be understood by reading, hearing, or viewing.

Person with a disability or individual with a disability: Anyone defined as such by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or the Maine Human Rights Act. See ADA definition at: <http://www.ada.gov/taman2.html#II-2.0000> or

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec4553.html>

VII. References

VIII. Document Information

Initial Issue Date: November 6, 2007

Latest Revision Date: January 9, 2015 – to update Document Information.

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Approved By: James R. Smith, Chief Information Officer, Office of Information Technology, 207-624-7568.

Position Title(s) or Agency Responsible for Enforcement: Office of the CIO, Division of Purchases, and State ADA Accessibility Coordinator.

Legal citation: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, 28 CFR § 35.160, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services, Subpart E – Communications. The Maine Human Rights Act, 5 MRSA § 4551 et seq. and Maine Human Rights Commission rule 94-348 Chapter 7 § 7.17.

Waiver Process: See the [Waiver Policy](#)¹.

¹ <http://maine.gov/oit/policies/waiver.htm>